



FLAG FOOTBALL RULES

MEN'S AND WOMEN'S LEAGUES GENERAL RULES

RULE 0. SFASU RULES AND EXCEPTIONS SECTION 1. STARTING THE GAME

Article 1. Eligibility

Every player must meet the eligibility requirements set forth in the Intramural Sports Policies and Procedures manual. Any individual that participated with varsity football is eligible to participate as long as they do not appear on a varsity roster during the current academic year. Any participants who are or have played for professional or semi-professional teams in football or flag football are not eligible to participate, no matter how long they have been removed.

Article 2. Player Equipment

- **NO POCKETS ARE ALLOWED TO BE WORN BY ANY PARTICIPANT DURING PLAY.** Pockets may not be taped or zipped up. Intramural Sports Staff (site managers and officials) has the right to refuse you the right to play in any contest if pockets are seen or if the participant refuses to allow staff to check for pockets. If pockets are seen during a game, the official's may penalize your team for illegal equipment and the player can be ejected.
- **Jerseys** with an opening more than 4" below the armpit may not be worn during play. Cut off shirts or shirts that have been manipulated must be able to remain tucked in or short enough to not interfere with the flag belt. Shirts that have been ripped and tied together creating a large hole on the sides are **ILLEGAL**.

Article 3. Field Rules

- Teams: Only officials, players, and one coach are permitted on the fields. All spectators are to remain in the stands and no closer than the bleachers.
- Teams are allowed one (1) non-playing coach in the designated team area.
- Use of electronic devices for coaching purposes is prohibited.
 - No use of cell phones to discuss game play with spectators across the field.
- **TOBACCO use is prohibited on the IMS Field Complex. Failure to comply with all intramural Rules and Regulations for the IMS Field Complex by any players or spectators will result in immediate expulsion of the individual(s) and possible forfeiture of the contest.**
- **No ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES will be allowed inside the IMS Field Complex. Teams and fans are not allowed to bring glass or metal containers onto the fields. Violators will be removed and SFASU Police will be notified about such violations.**

Article 4. Blood Rule

If and when an official observes that a player is bleeding, has an open wound, or has excess blood on his/her uniform, the player will be directed to leave the game. The injured player is not to return until the bleeding has stopped, the open wound is covered, and excessively bloody clothing has been removed. The player must be removed from play and a substitute must enter the game. The clock will run as normal once the player is removed.

RULE 1. THE GAME, FIELD, PLAYERS AND EQUIPMENT

SECTION 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1. The Game – Men and Women

The game shall be played between two (2) teams of seven (7) players each. Four (4) players are required to start the game and avoid a forfeit.

SECTION 2. THE FIELD

Article 3. Field Markings

Hash Marks shall be 6' long and 4" wide, and intersect the 20 and 40 yard lines. Additional hash marks, 3' long and 4" wide, shall touch the goal line and extend into the field of play. They shall run parallel with each sideline and be located 15 yards "in" from each sideline.

- The ball will be spotted between the hashes to reflect the dead ball spot. If the ball becomes dead in a "side zone," it will be placed on the hash mark. The ball will never be marked outside the hash marks.
- We will have strong and weak sides of the fields using hash marks.

SECTION 3. GAME EQUIPMENT

Article 1. The Ball

The official ball shall be pebble-grained leather or rubber covered and meet the recommendations of size and shape for a regulation football. There are no requirements regarding ball pressure and markings. Men shall use a regular size football only. Women and Co-Rec teams may choose between a regular, intermediate, youth or junior size ball. Each team may use a ball of their own choosing. There is no official game ball.

Article 2. Ball Spotters

Two soft and pliable ball spotters shall be used. One, orange in color, shall mark the A scrimmage line. The 2nd, gold in color, shall mark the B scrimmage line. The ball spotters shall be 1 yard apart.

SECTION 4. PLAYER EQUIPMENT – REQUIRED

Article 1. Jersey

The visiting team is responsible for the avoidance of similarity of colors, but if there is any doubt, the Referee may request the home team to change. Jerseys must be either:

- A. Long enough to be tucked in the pants/shorts during the entire down (an official can remove a player wearing a shirt that will not remain tucked in repeatedly) or
- B. Short enough so there is a minimum of 4" from the bottom of the jersey to the player's waistline.
- C. Jerseys with an opening more than 4" below the armpit may not be worn during play.
- D. Pinnies will be available from the scorekeeper. Pinnies should be worn just like shirts and they should not cover the flag belt. If they are too long, they must be tucked into the shorts.
- E. Shirts must be worn underneath pinnies provided by IMS Staff.
- F. Players must have jersey numbers either on personal shirts or on pinnies.

Article 2. Pants/Shorts

Each player must wear pants or shorts without any pocket(s), belt(s), belt loop(s), or exposed drawstrings. The pants or shorts must be different color than the flags. *PENALTY: Unsportsmanlike Conduct – 10 yards – Live ball or dead ball.*

Article 3. Flag Belt

Each player must wear a one-piece quick release belt, without any knots, at the waistline with three flags permanently attached, one flag on each side and in the center of their back. The flags should be of a contrasting color to their opponent's flags. The referee must KNOW that a player was not wearing a flag belt during the down in order to penalize that team.

NOTE: If the flags are not located on each hip and the tailbone, then the player must change to an appropriate size belt that meets the Rule.

PENALTY: Failure to wear legal equipment – 5 yards – live ball or dead ball.

Article 4. Shoes

Shoes shall be made of a canvas, leather, or synthetic material which covers the foot attached to a firm sole of leather, rubber, or composition material which may have cleats or be cleat less. Cleats are limited to studs or projections that do not exceed ½ inch in length and are made with nonabrasive rubber or rubber-type synthetic material, which does not chip or develop a cutting edge. Rubber cleats with a tipped metal material are legal. METAL SPIKES ARE ILLEGAL (see NIRSA rules for exceptions). If no cleats are available, the players must wear athletic type shoes.

PENALTY: Failure to wear required equipment (Live or Dead ball foul: 5 yards)

SECTION 5. PLAYER EQUIPMENT – OPTIONAL

Article 2. Gloves

Players may wear gloves consisting of a soft, pliable and nonabrasive material.

Article 3. Head wear

- A. Players may wear a knit stocking cap. The cap will have no bill. It can have a knit ball on top.
- B. Players may wear a headband no wider than 2” thick. The headband must be worn around the head only.
- C. Players may wear a soft rubber hat.
- D. Any head wear containing hard or unyielding material (including knots) may NOT be worn.

Article 4. Pads

Players may wear soft, pliable pads on the leg, knee, and/or ankle. Soft and yielding padded compression shorts and shirts are legal apparel.

Article 6. Play Books

Players may carry a play book inside their clothing as long as it is not made of an unyielding material. The play book may not be exposed during a play (i.e. you cannot tuck your playbook halfway into your shorts.) Play books may not be thrown onto the field and left during plays. A time-out or a 5 yard penalty (Delay of Game) will be called for leaving your playbook on the field.

Article 7. Sunglasses

Players may wear pliable or non-rigid sunglasses.

Article 8. Face Shield

Players may wear a face shield molded to the face with no protrusions to protect against a facial injury.

SECTION 6. PLAYER EQUIPMENT – ILLEGAL

Article 1. Illegal Equipment

A player wearing illegal equipment shall not be permitted to play. This applies to any equipment, which in the opinion of the Referee is dangerous or confusing. Types of equipment or substances, which shall always be declared illegal include:

- A. Headwear containing any hard, unyielding, stiff material, including billed hats or items containing knots.
EXCEPTION: Face Shield
- B. Jewelry of any kind (exception for medical alert bracelets).
- C. Pads or braces worn above the waist.
- D. Shoes with metal, ceramic, screw-in, or detachable cleats with exposed metal. EXCEPTION – Screw-in cleats are allowed if the screw is part of the cleat. Flat metal tips wrapped in plastic are legal. Baseball spikes are illegal.
- E. Shirts or jerseys, which do not remain tucked in. Any hood on a coat, sweatshirt, or shirt, which does not remain tucked in. Tear-away pants, jerseys or jerseys that have been altered in any manner which produces a knot-like protrusion or creates a tear-away jersey. SWEATSHIRTS WITH POCKETS ARE NOT ALLOWED. Jerseys with an opening more than 4” below the armpit may not be worn during play.
- F. Pants or shorts with any belt(s), belt loop(s), pocket(s), or exposed drawstring(s). They may not be turned inside out.
- G. Leg braces made of hard unyielding material unless covered by at least ½ inch of closed cell, slow recovery rubber or other material of similar thickness and physical properties.
- H. Any slippery or sticky foreign substance on any equipment or exposed part of the body.
- I. Exposed metal on clothes or persons. This includes “O” or “D” rings used to secure flag belts.
- K. Towels attached at the players waist.

RULE 2. DEFINITIONS OF PLAYING TERMS

SECTION 3. CATCH, INTERCEPTION, SIMULTANEOUS CATCH, TOUCHING

Article 1. Catch.

A catch is the act of establishing player possession of a live ball, which is in flight, and first contacting the ground inbounds.

- A. If one foot first lands inbounds and the receiver has possession and control of the ball, it is a catch or interception even though a subsequent step or fall takes the receiver out-of-bounds.
- B. A catch by any kneeling or prone inbounds player is a completion or an interception.

- C. A loss of the ball simultaneously while returning to the ground is not a catch or interception. A player **MUST** demonstrate possession of the ball upon striking the ground.

Article 3. Simultaneous Catch or Recovery.

A simultaneous catch or recovery is a catch or recovery in which there is joint possession of a live ball by opposing players who are inbounds. The ball is awarded to the team last in possession of the ball.

SECTION 6. FIGHTING

Article 1.

Fighting is the attempt by a player or non-player to strike or engage an opponent in a combative manner unrelated to football. Such acts include, but are not limited to, attempt to strike an opponent(s) with the arm(s), leg(s), or foot (feet) whether or not there is contact.

SECTION 7. FOUL

Article 1. Foul

A foul is a rule infraction for which a penalty is prescribed. NOTE: If in doubt, it is not a foul.

Article 2. Flagrant Foul.

A flagrant foul is so severe or extreme that it places an opponent in danger of serious injury and/or involves violations that are extremely or persistently vulgar or abusive conduct.

SECTION 14. LOSS OF A DOWN

Article 1.

“Loss of a down” means “loss of the right to repeat the down.” Periods can end on accepted penalties that include “loss of down.”

SECTION 18. PASSES

Article 2. Forward and Backward Pass.

A forward pass is a pass thrown with its initial direction toward the opponent’s end line. A backward pass is a pass thrown with its initial direction parallel with or toward the passer’s end line. A pass continues to be a pass until it is caught or strikes the ground. A backward pass or fumble that hits the ground is ruled dead at that spot.

SECTION 20. REMOVING THE FLAG BELT

Article 1. Flag Belt Removal.

When the flag belt is clearly removed from the runner in possession of the ball, the ball is declared dead and the down shall end. **An opponent who removes the flag from the runner should immediately hold the flag belt above his/her head to assist the official in locating the spot where the runner was downed.** This does not mean that the runner was down in that spot, but will only ASSIST the official in getting an accurate spot. *The flag is removed when the clip is broken.*

- A. **Throwing the flags** – If a player pulls an opponent’s flags and then throws them away, the official can penalize that player for unsportsmanlike conduct. The flags should be pulled and held in the air or dropped immediately.
- B. If a flag belt inadvertently falls to the ground, a one-hand tag between the shoulders and knees constitutes capture.

Article 2. Contact.

In an attempt to remove the flag belt from a runner, defensive players may contact the body and shoulders, but not the face, neck or any part of the head of an opponent with their hands. A defensive player may not hold, push, or knock the runner or other offensive players down in an attempt to remove the flag belt.

SECTION 21. SCREEN BLOCKING

Article 1.

Screen blocking is legally obstructing an opponent without using any part of the body to initiate contact.

SECTION 23. SHIFT

Article 1.

A shift is the action of one or more offensive players who, after a huddle or after taking a set position, move to a new set position before the ensuing snap.

SECTION 24. TAGGING

Article 1.

Tagging is placing one hand anywhere between the shoulders and knees of an opponent with the ball. The tagger may leave his/her feet to make the tag. Pushing, striking, slapping, and holding are not permitted. If the player trips the runner in his/her attempt to make a diving tag, it is a foul.

RULE 3. PERIODS, TIME FACTORS, SUBSTITUTIONS

SECTION 1. THE START OF EACH HALF

Article 1. Coin Toss.

Three minutes before the start of the game the Referee shall designate which captain shall call the fall of the coin, then toss a coin in the presence of the opposing captains. All officials shall be present at the coin toss.

The captain winning the toss shall have a choice of options for the first half or shall defer his/her option to the second half. The options for each half shall be:

- A. To choose whether his/her team will start on offense or defense.
- B. To choose the goal his/her team will defend. The captain, not having the first choice of options for a half, shall exercise the remaining option.
- C. Defer to the 2nd half.

Article 3. Forfeit Time.

GRACE PERIOD: SFA IMS shall invoke a 10-minute grace period that will begin at the regular scheduled game time. The game clock will start as long as both teams have at least one (1) player present at the scheduled game time. If at 10 minutes, the opposing fails to have enough players to start a win will be awarded with the score being 1-0.

Article 4. Start Each Half.

Unless moved by penalty, the ball shall be snapped on the 14 yard line to start each half.

SECTION 2. GAME TIME

Article 1. Playing Time and Intermissions.

Playing time shall be forty (40) minutes. Each half will consist of 20 minutes of running clock. The clock will stop during the last one (1) minute of the second half. The intermission between halves shall be 5 minutes.

Article 2. Interrupted and Shortened Games

- A. When thunder is heard or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, suspend play immediately. Wait at least 30 minutes prior to resuming play. If subsequent thunder is heard or lightning is seen after the beginning of the 30 minute count, reset the clock and another 30 minute count will begin. NOTE: If in doubt, consider the safety of all paramount to the game.
- B. When weather conditions are construed to be hazardous to life or limb of the participants, the crew of official or IMS Staff is authorized to delay or suspend the game.
- C. By mutual agreement of the opposing captains or head coaches and the Referee/IMS Staff, any remaining period may be shortened or the game terminated at any time.
- D. Games interrupted because of events beyond the control of the responsible administrative authority shall be continued from the point of interruption, unless:
 - a. The opposing captains and/or head coaches and the Referee/IMS Staff agree to terminate the game with the existing score.
 - b. The game is at or after half time. In which case the game will be considered final with the existing score.
 - c. The IMS Staff and Administration determine the game cannot be rescheduled due to scheduling conflicts. If the game is at or past half time, then it will be final with the existing score. If the game is in the first half, then it will be considered a no game.

Article 3. Extension of Period.

A period shall be extended by an untimed down, if one of the following occurred during a down in which time expires:

- A. There is a foul (other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer fouls, fouls for which enforcement by Rule result in a safety, or fouls which specify loss of down) by either team and the penalty accepted. For loss of down fouls, any score by the team which fouled is cancelled.
- B. There was a double foul.
- C. There was an inadvertent whistle.
- D. If a touchdown was scored, the Try is attempted unless the touchdown is scored during the last down of the 2nd half and the points(s) would not affect the outcome of the game or playoff qualifying.

Article 5. First 20 Minutes of Each Half.

The clock will start on the snap. It will run continuously for the first 20 minutes unless it is stopped for a:

- A. Team time-out – starts on the snap.
- B. Referee’s time-out starts on the ready for play.
- C. Injury –starts at the officials’ discretion.

Article 6. One Minute Warning.

Approximately one minute before the end of the 2nd half, the Referee shall stop the clock and inform both captains of the playing time remaining in that half. The clock starts on the snap. The Back Judge will announce to the captains the remaining time and status of the clock after every play during the final minute.

Article 7. Last 1 Minute.

During the final 1 minute of the 2nd half the clock will stop for:

- A. Incomplete legal or illegal forward pass – starts on the snap.
- B. Out-of-bounds – starts on the snap.
- C. Safety – starts on the snap.
- D. Team time-out – starts on the snap.
- E. Referee’s time-out – starts at his/her discretion.
- F. First down – dependent on the previous play.
- G. Touchdown – starts on the snap (after the Try).
- H. Penalty and administration – dependent on the previous play. (EXCEPTION: Delay of game – starts on the snap).
- I. Touchback – starts on the snap.
- J. Team A is awarded a new series – dependent on the previous play.
- K. Team B is awarded a new series – starts on the snap.
- L. Either team is awarded a new series following a legal punt – starts on the snap.
- M. Team attempting to conserve time illegally – starts on the ready.
- N. Team attempting to consume time illegally – starts on the snap.
- O. Inadvertent whistle – starts on the ready.

SECTION 3: TIE GAME

NOTE: IF A REGULAR SEASON GAME ENDS IN A TIE, WE WILL NOT HAVE AN OVERTIME PERIOD. THE FOLLOWING RULES ONLY APPLY TO PLAYOFF GAMES

Article 1. Mandatory Meeting

If a game ends with a tie score, the officials/IMS Staff shall bring all player and coaches of both teams to the center of the field. They shall discuss the tie breaker procedures and answer all questions prior to the coin toss. After this meeting, the captains will stay while the remaining players and coaches return to their respective team box.

Article 2. Coin Toss

A coin will be tossed (or Rock, Paper, Scissors will be played by the captains) by the Referee to determine the options as in the start of the game. The visiting captain shall call the toss. There will be only 1 coin flip during the overtime. IF additional overtime periods are played, captains will alternate choices. The winner of the toss shall be given options of offense, defense, or direction. The loser of the toss shall make a choice of the remaining options. All overtime periods are played toward the same goal line.

Article 3. Tie Breaker

Unless moved by penalty, each team shall start 1st and goal from the B 10 yard line. The object will be to score a touchdown. An overtime period consists of a series of 4 downs by each team. If the score is still tied after 1 period, play will proceed to a 2nd period or as many as are needed to determine a winner. If the 1st team which is awarded the ball scores, the opponent will still have a chance to win the game. Unless moved by penalty, they will start 1st and goal from the B 10 yard line. A Try will be attempted and scored as indicated in Rule 8. When B secures possession, the ball is dead and the series is over. The ball will be placed at the B 10 yard line, and the original defense will begin their series of 4 downs, if available. Each team is entitled to 1 time-out only, during the entire overtime.

Article 4. Fouls and Penalties

They are administered similar to the regular game. A shall be awarded a new series of 4 downs when an automatic 1st sown foul is accepted. Dead ball fouls following a touchdown are penalized on the Try. Dead ball fouls following a successful Try will be penalized from the succeeding spot, the B 10 yard line, if accepted.

NOTE: The goal line shall **always** be zone line-to-gain in overtime, regardless of the number of overtimes played.

SECTION 4: TIME-OUTS

Article 3. Charged Time-Outs.

Each team is entitled to two (2) charged time-outs during each half. Time-outs do not carry over into following halves or overtime periods.

Article 4. Length of Time-Outs.

A charged time-out requested by any player or designated head coach, which is legally granted, shall be 30 seconds and can be shortened if both teams are ready.

Article 7. Authorized conferences.

There are 2 types of authorized conferences permitted during charged time-outs:

- A. Players and nonplayers may meet directly in front of the team box within 5 yards of the sideline; or
- B. One coach or player coach may enter his/her team's huddle between the hash marks to confer with no more than 7 players (**Co-Rec Rule – 8 players**).

Article 8. Injured Player.

An injured or apparently injured player, who is discovered by an official while the ball is dead and the clock is stopped, shall be replaced for at least 1 down unless the halftime or overtime period intermission occurs. A player who is bleeding or has an open wound or has an excessive amount of blood on the uniform shall be considered an injured player and must leave the game until all the blood is cleaned or the clothing is removed and replaced.

Article 9. Concussion

Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate healthcare professional.

SECTION 5: DELAYS

Article 1. Delay of Game.

The ball must be put in play promptly and legally and any action or inaction by either team, which tends to prevent this, is delay of game. This includes:

- A. Failure to snap within 25 seconds after the ball is declared ready for play.
- B. Putting the ball into play before it is declared ready for play.
- C. Deliberately advancing the ball after it has been declared dead.
- D. Coach – Referee Conference after all permissible charged time-outs for the coach's team have been used, and during which the Referee is requested to reconsider the application of a rule and no change results.

Penalty: Dead Ball Foul, Delay of Game. 5 yards from the succeeding spot.

SECTION 6. CONSERVING OR CONSUMING TIME

Article 1. Illegally Conserving or Consuming Time.

When a team attempts to conserve or consume time illegally, the Referee shall order the clock started or stopped. NOTE: If in doubt, apply conserving/consuming time.

SECTION 7: SUBSTITUTIONS

Article 1. Eligible Substitutions

Between downs any number of eligible substitutes may replace players provided the substitute is completed by having the replaced players off the field before the ball is snapped. An incoming substitute must enter the field directly from his/her team area. A replaced player must leave the field immediately at the sideline nearest his/her team area prior to the ball being snapped.

Penalty: Illegal Substitution, 5 yards. If it is a dead ball or nonplayer foul, 5 yards from the succeeding spot.

Article 2. Legal Substitutions

During the same dead ball interval, no substitute shall become a player and then withdraw, and no player shall withdraw and then re-enter as a substitute unless a penalty is accepted, a dead ball foul occurs, there is a charged time-out, or a period ends

Penalty: Illegal Substitution, Dead Ball Foul, 5 yards from the Succeeding Spot

RULE 4. BALL IN PLAY, DEAD BALL, OUT-OF-BOUNDS

SECTION 1. BALL INPLAY – DEAD BALL

Article 1. Dead Ball Becomes Live.

A dead ball, after having been declared ready for play, becomes a live ball when it is snapped legally.

Article 2. Ball Declared Dead.

A live ball becomes dead and an official shall sound the whistle or declare it dead:

- A. When it goes out-of-bounds.
- B. When any part of the runner other than a hand(s) or foot (feet) touches the ground.
- C. A touchdown, touchback, safety, or successful Try is made.
- D. The ball strikes the ground following 1st touching by K
- E. K catches a punt which is beyond the neutral zone; when an untouched punt comes to rest on the ground and no player attempts to secure it.
- F. A forward pass strikes the ground or is caught simultaneously by opposing players
- G. A backward pass or fumble by a player strikes the ground or is caught simultaneously by opposing players. A ball snapped, which hits the ground before or after getting to the intended receiver, is dead at the spot where it hits the ground. NOTE: If in doubt, a snap close to the ground remains live.
- H. A forward pass is legally completed or a loose ball is caught by a player on, above, or behind the opponent's goal line
- I. A runner has a flag belt removed legally by an opponent. A flag belt is removed when the clip is detached from the belt, the belt is torn into more than 1 piece, or the flag is torn off the belt (flag only). NOTE: If in doubt, the flag has been pulled.
- J. A runner is legally tagged (flag only)
- K. A passer is deflagged/tagged prior to releasing the ball. NOTE: If in doubt, the ball is released.
- L. A muff of a punt strikes the ground
- M. K's punt breaks the plane of R's goal line.
- N. B secures possession during a Try or overtime
- O. An official sounds his/her whistle inadvertently during a down in which the penalty for a foul is declined, when:
 - a. The ball is in player possession – the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where declared dead or replay the down.
 - b. The ball is loose from a fumble, backward pass, illegal kick, or illegal forward pass – the team in possession may elect to put the ball in play where possession was lost or replay the down
 - c. During a legal forward pass or a punt – the ball is returned to the previous spot and the down replayed

If a foul occurs during any of the above downs, an accepted penalty shall be administered as in any other play situation.

When a foul is accepted, disregard the inadvertent whistle. NOTE: There is no time added to the game clock during a down with an inadvertent whistle.

SECTION 2: INBOUNDS SPOT

Article 1. Placement of Dead Ball

When the ball become dead between the hash marks, play is resumed at the dead ball spot. IF the ball becomes dead in a side zone, place the ball at the nearest hash mark at the corresponding yard line.

Article 2. Anywhere Between the Hash Marks

Before the ready for play signal, Team A may designate the spot from which the ball is put in play anywhere between the inbounds lines (hash marks): start of each half; for the try; following a touchback, safety, try, and awarded catch after a punt; and for the start of each series using an overtime procedure.

SECTION 3: OUT-OF-BOUNDS

Article 1. Player Out-of-Bounds

A player or other person is out-of-bounds when any part of the person is touching anything, other than another player or official, who is on or outside the sideline or end line.

Article 2. Player in Possession Out-of-Bounds

A ball in possession is out-of-bounds when the runner or the ball touches anything, other than another player or official, which is on or outside the sideline or end line

Article 3. Loose Ball Out-of-Bounds

A loose ball is out-of-bounds when it touches anything, including a player or official, who is out-of-bounds

RULE 5. SERIES OF DOWNS, NUMBER OF DOWNS AND TEAM POSSESSION AFTER PENALTY

SECTION 1: A SERIES – HOW STARTED, HOW BROKEN, RENEWED

Article 3. Zone Line-to-Gain.

The zone line-to-gain in any series shall be the zone in advance of the ball, unless distance has been lost due to penalty or failure to gain. In such case, the original zone in advance of the ball at the beginning of the series of downs is the zone line-to-gain. The most forward point of the ball, when declared dead between the goal lines, shall be the determining factor.

Article 4. Awarding a New Series

A new series of downs shall be awarded when a team moves the ball into the next zone on a play free from penalty; or a penalty against the opponents moves the ball into the next zone; or an accepted penalty against the opponents involves an automatic 1st down; or after enforcement of a penalty against A, the ball is in advance of the zone line-to-gain; or either team has obtained legal possession of a ball as a result of a penalty, punt, touchback, pass interception, or failure to gain the zone in advance of the ball.

NOTE: If in doubt, the out-of-bounds punt is “short” of the zone line-to-gain

Article 5. Incorrect Down

Until a new series is awarded, the Referee shall have authority to correct an error in the number of downs.

SECTION 2: DOWN AND POSSESSION AFTER A PENALTY

Article 2. Foul Before Change of Team Possession.

Following a distance penalty between the goal lines which occurs during a down and before any change of team possession during that down, the ball belongs to Team A. The down shall be repeated unless the penalty also involves a loss of down, or leaves the ball on or beyond the zone-line-to-gain. If the penalty involves a loss of down, the down shall count as one of the four in that series.

Article 3. Foul After a Change of Team Possession.

Following a distance penalty for a foul committed after team possession has changed during that down, the ball belongs to the team in possession when the foul occurred. The down and distance established by that penalty shall be first down with zone-line-to-gain.

Article 5. Rule Decisions Final.

NO RULE DECISION MAY BE CHANGED AFTER THE BALL IS NEXT LEGALLY SNAPPED.

RULE 6. KICKING THE BALL

SECTION 1. PUNT

Article 2. Punt

Prior to making the ball ready for play on fourth down, the Referee must ask the A captain if he/she wants to punt. The Referee must announce this decision to all Team A and Team B players and the other officials. The A captain may request to punt on any down. After such announcement, the ball must be punted. [EXCEPTION: If (a) a Team A or B time-out is called, or (b) the period ends, (c) or a foul occurs any time prior to or during this down again, the Referee must ask the Team A captain whether or not he/she wants to punt and communicate this decision to the Team B captain].

Article 3. Formation and Snap.

Neither K nor R may enter the neutral zone until the ball is punted. *Penalty: Live Ball Penalty, Illegal Procedure, 5 yards from the previous spot.* NOTE: All scrimmage line rules regarding the snap, encroachment, false start, minimum line players, motion, and shift apply to the punt.

Article 4. Punting the Ball

After receiving the snap, the kicker must punt the ball immediately in a continuous motion
Penalty: Illegal Procedure, 5 yards

Article 5. After Being Punted.

Once the ball is punted, and R player may block the kick. If the blocked punt hits the ground, it is dead at that spot. If the punt is blocked by an R player behind K's scrimmage line and then caught by any K player behind K's scrimmage line (1st ball spotter – orange), K may run and/or throw a pass. R may advance the punt anywhere in the field of play. A K player cannot punt the ball to himself/herself or any other K player. K may punt the ball once only per down.
Penalty: Illegal Kicking, 10 yards

Article 6. Punt Crosses K's Scrimmage Line

When a punt, which has crossed K's scrimmage line (first ball spotter-orange), touches a player from either team and then hits the ground, the ball is dead and belongs to R. If it hits an R player and then is caught in the air, R can advance it. If caught by K, the ball is dead and belongs to K, and a new series begins for K.
K cannot advance a muffed punt. THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A FAIR CATCH IN FLAG FOOTBALL.

Article 7. First Touching

If any K player touches a punt after it crosses K's scrimmage line (1st ball spotter – orange) and before it is touched there by an R player, it is referred to as "1st touching". R may take the ball at that spot or may choose to have the ball put in play as determined by the action which follows 1st touching. The right of R to take the ball at the spot of 1st touching by K is cancelled if R touches the punt and thereafter during the down commits a foul or if the penalty is accepted for any foul committed during the down.

Article 8. Punt Out-of-Bounds Between the Goal Lines or at Rest.

If a punt goes out-of-bounds between the goal lines or comes to rest inbounds untouched and no player attempts to secure it, the ball becomes dead and belongs to the receiving team at that spot.

Article 9. Punt Behind the Goal Line

When a punt breaks the plane of R's goal line, it is a touchback unless R chooses the spot of 1st touching by K.

SECTION 2. KICK CATCHING INTERFERENCE

Article 1. Interference

While any punt is in flight beyond K's scrimmage line (1st ball spotter – orange), K shall not touch the ball or R, nor obstruct R's path to the ball, unless the punt has been touched by R. K may catch, touch, muff, or bat a punt in flight beyond K's scrimmage line if no R player is in position to catch the ball.
Penalty: Kick Catching Interference, 10 yards.

SECTION 3. SIGNALS

Article 1. Signal

Players shall ignore any signals given by K or R. The ball remains live.

RULE 7. SNAPPING, HANDING AND PASSING THE BALL

SECTION 1. THE SCRIMMAGE

Article 1. The Start

All plays must be started by a legal snap next to the orange ball spotter, which is on or between the hash marks. The ball may be moved with approval of the Referee due to poor field conditions.

Article 2. Ball Responsibility.

Team A players are responsible for retrieving the ball after a down. The snapper will bring it from the huddle to the A scrimmage line (first ball spotter – orange). A towel may be placed on the ground under the ball, regardless of weather or field conditions

SECTION 2. PRIOR TO THE SNAP

Article 1. Encroachment

Following the ready for play and until the snap, no player on defense may encroach, touch the ball, nor may any player contact opponents or in any other way interfere with them. This includes standing in the neutral zone to give defensive signals, or shifting through the zone. After the snapper has placed his/her hand on the ball, it is encroachment for any players to break the scrimmage line plane, except for the snapper's head to be over the ball.

Penalty: Dead Ball Foul, Encroachment, 5 yards from the succeeding spot. During the interval between downs when the defensive team commits two or more consecutive encroachments fouls, the penalty will be 10 yards for the subsequent encroachment fouls.

Article 2. False Start.

No offensive player shall make a false start. A false start includes simulating a charge or start of a play. An infraction of this rule may be penalized whether or not the ball is snapped and the penalty for any resultant encroachment shall be cancelled.

Penalty: Dead Ball Foul, Illegal Procedure, 5 yards from the succeeding spot.

Article 3. Snap.

The snapper shall pass the ball back from its position on the ground with a quick and continuous motion of the hand. The snap can go between the legs of the center or the center can kneel or crouch and pass the ball from the side. All snaps must begin from the ground and the center may not be kneeling in the neutral zone.

SECTION 3. POSITION AND ACTION DURING THE SNAP

Article 1. Legal Position.

Anytime on or after the ball is marked ready for play, each A player must momentarily be at least 5 yards inbounds before the snap. *Penalty: Illegal Formation, 5 yards.*

Article 2. Minimum Line Players.

The snapper is the only A player required to on their scrimmage line (1st ball spotter – orange) at the snap.

Article 3. Motion.

One offensive player may be in motion, but not in motion towards the opponent's end line, during the snap. Other offensive players must be stationary in their positions without movement of the feet, body, head or arms. *Penalty: Live ball Foul, Illegal Motion, 5 yards.*

Article 4. Direct Snap.

The player who receives the snap must be at least two yards behind the offensive scrimmage line (first ball spotter – orange). Direct snaps are illegal. The snapper may not snap the ball to him/herself. NOTE: If in doubt, the A player receiving the snap is two yards back

Penalty: Live Ball Foul, Illegal Procedure, 5 yards.

Article 5. Shift.

In a snap preceded by a huddle or shift, all offensive players must come to a complete stop and remain stationary in legal position without movement of feet, body, head, or arms for at least one full second before the snap. *Penalty: Live Ball Foul, Illegal Shift, 5 yards.*

SECTION 4. HANDING THE BALL

Article 1. Anytime.

Any player may hand the ball forward or backward at anytime.

SECTION 6. BACKWARD PASS AND FUMBLE

Article 1. Legal

A runner may pass the ball backward or lose player possession by a fumble anytime except if intentionally thrown out-of-bounds to conserve time.

Penalty: Illegal Pass, 5 yards from the spot of the pass or fumble and loss of down

The Referee will start the clock on the ready for play. NOTE: If in doubt, the pass is backward.

Article 2. Caught or intercepted.

A player may not throw an untouched backward pass to him/herself. *Penalty: Live Ball Foul, Illegal Pass, 5 yards from the spot of the pass and loss of down if by Team A before possession changes during a scrimmage down.*

Article 3. Simultaneous Catch.

If a backward pass or fumble in flight is caught simultaneously by members of opposing teams inbounds, the ball becomes dead at the spot of the catch and belongs to the team last in possession of the ball.

Article 4. Out-of-Bounds.

A backward pass or fumble which goes out-of-bounds between the goal lines belongs to the team last in possession at the out-of-bounds spot. If out-of-bounds behind a goal line, it is a touchback or safety.

Article 5. Ball Dead When It Hits the Ground.

A backward pass or fumble which touched the ground between the goal lines is dead at the spot where it touches the ground and belongs to the last team in possession unless lost on downs.

NOTE: When a ball is fumble forward from the spot of the fumble, the ball will be declared dead from the spot of the fumble, not from where the ball touches the ground.

SECTION 7. LEGAL AND ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS

Article 1. Legal Forward Pass.

All players are eligible to touch or catch a pass except the thrower (unless touched by an opponent previous to the reception). During a scrimmage down and before team possession has changed, a forward pass may be thrown provided the passer's feet are behind Team A's scrimmage line (first ball spotter – orange) when the ball leaves the passer's hand. Only one forward pass can be thrown per down.

PLAY: A-1 throw a short forward pass and A-1 catches that pass: ILLEGAL. *Live Ball Foul, illegal forward pass, 5 yards from the spot of the throw and loss of down.*

Article 2. Illegal Forward Pass.

A forward pass is illegal:

- A. If the passer's foot is beyond Team A's scrimmage line (first ball spotter – orange) when the ball leaves his/her hand.
- B. If thrown after team possession has changed during the down.
- C. If intentionally thrown to the ground or out-of-bounds to save loss of yardage.
- D. If a passer catches his/her untouched forward or backward pass.
- E. If there is more than one forward pass per down.

SECTION 8. COMPLETED OR INTERCEPTED PASSES

Article 1. Pass Caught or Intercepted.

A forward pass is completed when caught by a member of the passing team inbounds. A forward pass is intercepted when caught by a member of the opposing team inbounds. It is counted as a completion or interception as long as the 1st part of the receiver to make contact with the ground after the catch, usually 1 foot, touches inbound.

Article 2. Simultaneous Catch by Opposing Players

If a forward pass is caught simultaneously by members of opposing teams inbounds, the ball becomes dead at the spot of catch and belongs to the offensive team.

SECTION 10. FORWARD PASS INTERFERENCE

Article 1. Interference

During a down in which a legal forward pass crosses Team A's scrimmage line contact which interferes with an eligible receiver who is beyond Team A's scrimmage line is pass interference unless it occurs when 2 or more eligible receivers make a simultaneous and bona fide attempt to reach, catch, or bat a pass. ***Hindering an opponent's vision without making an attempt to catch, intercept or bat a ball is pass interference, even though no contact was made.*** The player must place 1 or both hands in front of the opponent's face or wave his/her hand(s) or arm(s) near the opponent's face. It is also pass interference if an eligible receiver is deflagged/tagged prior to touching the pass thrown beyond Team A's scrimmage line,

Article 2. Offensive Pass Interference.

After the ball is snapped, and until it has been touched by any player, there shall be no offensive pass interference beyond Team A's scrimmage line. *Penalty: Live Ball Foul, Offensive Pass Interference, 10 yards from the previous spot.*

Article 3. Defensive Pass Interference.

After the pass is thrown, and until it is touched by any player, there shall be no defensive pass interference beyond Team A's scrimmage line while the ball is in flight. It is illegal to hinder an opponent's vision without making an attempt to catch, deflect, or intercept a ball, even though no contact was made. *Penalty: Live Ball Foul, Defensive Pass Interference, 10 yards from the previous spot.*

Article 4. Not interference

Action by Team B which is not a foul and which is obviously away from the direction of the pass is not defensive pass interference. It can be penalized as contact or a live ball unsportsmanlike conduct.

Article 5. Catchable/Uncatchable

Whether a pass is catchable or uncatchable has no bearing on offensive and defensive forward pass interference.

RULE 8. SCORING PLAYS AND TOUCHBACK

SECTION 1. COMMUNICATION

Article 1. Teams and Officials.

The Referee will communicate the current score to the A and B captains, head coaches, and all officials after each touchdown, Try, and safety. If there is a disagreement regarding the current or final score, the Referee/IMS Staff will make the final decision after consulting with the other officials and, if available, the scorekeeper.

SECTION 2. FORFEITED GAME

Article 1. The score of a forfeited game shall be 1-0. Sportsmanship ratings will be recorded as followed:

Forfeit: Winning Team – 4, Forfeiting Team – 0

Default: Winning Team – 4, Defaulting Team – 3

SECTION 3. MERCY RULE

Article 1. Two Minute Warning.

If there is a 30 or more point differential in the last 20 minutes of the 2nd half, the game shall be over. If there is an 18 or more point differential with 2 minutes remaining in the 2nd half, the game shall be over. This rule applies to both Men/Women and Co-Rec teams. Prior to implementing the Mercy Rule, the Referee shall apply the Extension of Period Rule. NOTE: Game clock starts according to the Rule 3

Article 3. Any Time After Halftime.

If a team is 45 or more points ahead any time after the completion of the first half, the game shall be over.

SECTION 4. PLAYER RESPONSIBILITY

Article 1. Flags pulled after a score by the Official

The player scoring a touchdown must raise his/her arms so that the nearest official can deflag the player. If the player is not deflagged after one or two tries and the official observes tampering of the flag belt as to give that player an advantage over the opponent, that player will be disqualified and the score will be negated and the ball will be moved by penalty from the previous spot. *Penalty: Unsportsmanlike Conduct, 10 yards from the previous spot. If by Team A, loss of down. If by team B, automatic first down.*

SECTION 5. TOUCHDOWN = 6 OR 9 POINTS

Article 1. Touchdown Values

All touchdowns are 6 points (See Co-Rec Modifications)

Article 2. Scoring

A touchdown is legal when the nose of the ball crosses the goal line when a runner advances from the field of play so that the ball penetrates the vertical plane of the opponent's goal line. It is a touchdown when a loose ball is caught by a player while the ball is on or behind the opponent's goal line.

SECTION 6. TRY = 1, 2, OR 3 POINTS

Article 2. 1, 2 or 3 Points.

An opportunity to score 1 point from the 3 yard line, 2 points from the 10 yard line, or 3 points from the 20 yard line by running or passing only shall be granted to the team scoring a touchdown.

Article 3. Try Begins and Ends.

The Try begins when the ball is marked ready for play. The Try ends when B secures possession, the Try is successful, or the ball becomes dead by Rule.

Article 4. Next Play.

After a Try, the ball shall be snapped by the opponent of the scoring team at their own "14" yard line, unless moved by penalty.

SECTION 8. MOMENTUM, SAFETY, AND TOUCHBACK

Article 1. Safety = 2 Points.

It is a safety when:

- A. A runner carries the ball from the field of play to or across his/her own goal line, and it becomes dead there in his/her team's possession;
EXCEPTION: Momentum Rule - When a defensive player intercepts a forward pass or catches a punt between his/her 5-yard line and the goal line and his/her original momentum carries him/her into the end zone where the ball is declared dead in his/her team's possession behind the goal line, the ball belongs to the defensive team at the spot where possession was gained.
- B. A player punts, passes, fumbles, snaps, muffs or bats a loose ball from the field of play to or across his/her goal line and the ball subsequently becomes dead there in his/her team's possession. This includes when the ball is declared dead on or behind their goal line. However, it does not apply to a legal forward pass, which becomes incomplete.
- C. A player on defense commits any foul for which the penalty is accepted and measurement is from a spot in his/her end zone; or throws an illegal forward pass from his/her end zone and the penalty is declined in a situation which leaves him/her in possession at the spot of the illegal pass and with the ball having been forced into the end zone by the passing team.
- D. After a safety the ball shall be snapped by the scoring team at their own 14 yard line, unless moved by penalty.

Article 2. Touchback.

It is a touchback when:

- A. K's punt breaks the plane of R's goal line.
- B. The ball is out-of-bounds behind a goal line (except for an incomplete forward pass), when the ball becomes dead in possession of a player on, above, or behind the player's own goal line, or when the ball becomes dead not in possession on, above, or behind the team's own goal line, and the attacking team is responsible. NOTES: If in doubt, it is a touchback. If in doubt, the out-of-bounds punt near the goal line is a touchback.
- C. After a touchback, the ball shall be snapped from the nearest 14 yard line, unless moved by penalty

RULE 9. CONDUCT OF PLAYERS AND OTHERS

SECTION 1. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

Article 1. Noncontact Player Acts.

No player or non-player shall commit noncontact acts during a period or intermission.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- A. Refusal to comply or abide by the decision of an official.
- B. Using words similar to offensive audibles and quarterback cadence prior to the snap in an attempt to interfere with Team A's signals or movements.
- C. Intentionally kicking at the ball, other than a punt.
- D. Leaving the field between downs to gain an advantage unless replaced or with permission of the Referee.
- E. Participating while wearing illegal player equipment.
- F. Being outside the team box, but not on the field, during a live ball. NOTE: During a dead ball, coaches can be a maximum of 2 steps on the field for coaching purposes only.

Penalty: Unsportsmanlike Conduct, 10 yards. If flagrant in 1A, 1B, 1C, and 1D, the offender shall be disqualified. In article 1F the 1st offense is a warning, the 2nd offense is 5 yards, and each subsequent offense is 10 yards.

Article 2. Dead Ball Player Fouls.

When the ball becomes dead in possession of a player, he/she shall not:

- A. Intentionally kick the ball
- B. Spike the ball into the ground
- C. Throw the ball high into the air.

Penalty: Unsportsmanlike Conduct, 10 yards, and if flagrant, the offender will be disqualified.

Article 3. Prohibited Acts.

There will be no unsportsmanlike conduct by players, substitutes, coaches, or others subject to the Rules.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- A. Attempting to influence a decision by an official.
- B. Disrespectfully addressing an official.
- C. Indicating objections to an official's decision.
- D. Holding an unauthorized conference, or being on the field illegally.
- E. Using profanity, taunting, insulting or vulgar language or gestures.
- F. Intentionally contacting a game official (Offender will be disqualified)
- G. Fighting an opponent. (Offender will be disqualified)
- H. Leaving the team area and entering the playing field during a fight. (Offender will be disqualified)

Penalty: Unsportsmanlike Conduct, 10 yards, and if flagrant the offender will be disqualified.

Article 4. Second Unsportsmanlike Foul.

The second unsportsmanlike foul by the same player or non-player results in disqualification.

Article 5. Player Ejection

If a player is ejected from a game due to unsportsmanlike conduct, he/she will not be allowed to remain on the bench. **Out of site, out of sound.** The field area includes the IMS Field Complex. The player must be out of sight and sound. If the player refuses to leave IMS Field Complex after being told to by the IMS Staff, the team may be penalized for another unsportsmanlike penalty or forced to forfeit the game. – **All players ejected for unsportsmanlike reasons must go through the reinstatement process and are suspended from all Intramural Sports activities until that meeting takes place.**

Article 6. Team Unsportsmanlike Conduct

If a team commits four (4) unsportsmanlike conducts penalties in a single game, that game will be forfeited to the opponent and the team must meet with the Coordinator– Intramural Sports prior to their next contest. The captain will be held responsible for team actions.

SECTION 2. UNFAIR ACTS

Article 2. Unfair Acts

No player or nonplayer shall use verbiage or commit any act not in accordance with the spirit of fair play for the purposes of confusing the opponent. *Penalty: Unfair Act, 10 yards*

SECTION 3. PERSONAL FOULS

Article 1. Player Restrictions.

No player or non-player shall commit a personal foul during a period or an intermission. Any act prohibited hereunder or any other act of unnecessary roughness is a personal foul. No player shall:

- A. Strip or attempt to strip the ball from a runner in possession by punching, striking or stealing. NOTE: Any player who controls a pass with both feet off the ground becomes a runner when the 1st part of the person touches the ground.
- B. Throw the runner to the ground.
- C. Hurdle any other player.
- D. Contact an opponent either before or after the ball is declared dead.
- E. Make contact of any nature with an opponent, which is deemed unnecessary including using fists, locked hands, elbows or any part of the forearm or hand.
- F. Drive or run into an opponent
- G. Position himself/herself on the shoulders or body of a teammate or opponent to gain an advantage.
- H. Tackle the runner by grasping or encircling with the hand(s) or arm(s) and taking the opponent toward the ground as in tackle football. (Offender will be disqualified)
- I. Fight an opponent. (Offender will be disqualified) NOTE: Each player who participates in the fight will be assessed 1 flagrant personal foul for fighting

Penalty: Personal Foul, 10 yards, and if flagrant, the offender will be disqualified

Article 2. Roughing the Passer.

Defensive players must make a definite effort to avoid charging into a passer after it is clear the ball has been thrown forward legally. No defensive player shall contact the passer who is standing still or fading back as he/she is considered out of the play after the pass. Roughing the passer restrictions do not apply if the forward pass is thrown from beyond A's scrimmage line. NOTE: The ball is considered part of the passer's arm when considering contact on the passer.

Penalty: Roughing the Passer, 10 yards, and automatic first down.

- Contacting a passer's arm, upper body, head, neck, shoulders is considered roughing the passer. Rushers are encouraged to go for the flag belts every opportunity to avoid contacting the passer.

Article 3. Screen Blocking.

The offensive screen block shall take place without contact. The screen blocker shall have his/her hands and arms at his/her side or behind his/her back when screen blocking. Any use of the hands, arms, elbows, legs, or body to initiate contact during an offensive player's screen block is illegal. A blocker may use his/her hand or arms to break a fall or retain body balance. A player must be on his/her feet before, during, and after screen blocking.

- Screen blockers must remain inside the framework of their body at all times.
- Blocking downfield is legal, but all screen blocking rules apply.

Penalty: Personal Foul, 10 yards.

Article 4. Screen Blocking Fundamentals.

A player shall not:

- A. Take a position closer than a normal step when behind a stationary opponent.
- B. Make contact when assuming a position at the side or in front of a stationary opponent.
- C. Take a position so close to a moving opponent that his/her opponent cannot avoid contact by stopping or changing direction. The speed of the player to be screened will determine where the screener may take his/her stationary position. This position will vary and may be 1 to 2 normal steps or strides from the opponent.
- D. After assuming his/her legal screening position move to maintain it, unless he/she moves in the same direction and path as his/her opponent. If the screener violates any of these provisions and contact results, he/she has committed a personal foul.

Penalty: Personal Foul, 10 yards.

Article 5. Blocking and Interlocked Interference

Teammates of a runner or passer may interfere for him/her by screen blocking, but shall not use interlocked interference by grasping or encircling one another in any manner.

Penalty: Personal Foul, 10 yards.

Article 6. Use of Hands or Arms by the Defense.

Defensive players must go around the offensive player's screen block. The arms and hands may not be used as a wedge to contact the opponent. The application of the Rule depends entirely on the judgment of the official. A blocker may use his/her arms or hands to break a fall or retain his/her balance.

Penalty: Personal Foul, 10 yards.

SECTION 4. RUNNER

Article 1. Removing the Flag Belt.

There are rules, which are established for flag football because of legal or illegal removal of the flag belt.

- A. Players must have possession of the ball before they can be deflagged legally by an opponent.
- B. When a runner loses his/her flag belt accidentally, inadvertently, or on purpose, play continues. The deflagging reverts to a one-hand tag of the runner between the shoulders and knees.
- C. In circumstances where a belt is removed illegally, play should continue with the option of a penalty after the play. *Penalty: Personal Foul, 10 yards.*
- D. An opponent intentionally pulling a flag belt from an offensive player without the ball is illegal. *Penalty: Personal Foul, 10 yards.*
- E. Tampering with the flag belt in any way to gain an advantage including tying, using foreign materials, or other such acts is illegal. *Penalty: Personal Foul, 10 yards, player disqualification, loss of down or automatic first down.*
- F. A nonplayer deflags or interferes with a runner. *Penalty: Personal Foul, 10 yards. The Referee will award a Touchdown and disqualify the nonplayer*

Article 2. Guarding the Flag Belt.

Runners shall not flag guard by using their hands, arms, or the ball to deny the opportunity for an opponent to pull or remove the flag belt. Examples of flag guarding include, but are not limited to:

- A. Placing or swinging the hand or arm over the flag belt.
- B. Placing the ball in possession over the flag belt.
- C. Lowering the shoulders in such a manner that places the arm over the flag belt.

Penalty: Flag Guarding, 10 yards.

Article 3. Stiff Arm.

The runner shall be prohibited from contacting an opponent with extended hand or arm. This includes the use of a “stiff arm” extended to ward off an opponent attempting to deflag/tag.

Penalty: Personal Foul, 10 yards.

Article 5. Obstruct the Runner

An opponent shall not hold, grasp, or obstruct the forward progress of a runner when in the act of removing the flag belt or making a legal tag.

Penalty: Personal Foul, 10 yards

Article 6. Charge

A runner shall not charge into nor contact an opponent in his/her path nor attempt to run between 2 opponents or between an opponent and the sideline, unless the space is such as to provide a reasonable chance for him/her to go through without contact. If a runner in his/her progress has established a straight line path, he/she may not be crowded out of that path, but if an opponent is able to legally establish a defensive position in that path, the runner must avoid contact by changing direction.

Penalty: Personal Foul, 10 yards.

SECTION 5. BATTING AND KICKING

Article 1. Batting a Loose Ball

Players shall not bat a loose ball other than a pass or fumble in flight. EXCEPTION 1: A backward pass in flight shall not be batted or thrown forward by the passing team. EXCEPTION 2: K may bat a grounded or an airborne punt beyond the K scrimmage line toward their own goal.

Penalty: Illegal Batting, 10 yards

Article 2. Batting a Ball in Player Possession

A ball in player possession shall not be batted forward by player of the team in possession.

Penalty: Illegal Batting, 10 yards

Article 3. Illegal Kicking

No player shall intentionally kick a ball other than a punt. NOTE: An illegal kick shall be treated like a fumble.

Penalty: Illegal Kicking, 10 yards

SECTION 6. ILLEGAL PARTICIPATION

Article 1. It is Illegal Participation:

- A. To have 8 (**Co-Rec Rule 9**) or more players participating
- B. **To have more than the legal number of males or females participating at the snap (Co-Rec Rule)**
- C. If an injured player is not replaced for at least 1 down; unless the halftime or overtime intermission occurs
- D. To use a player, replaced player, or substitute in a substitution or pretended substitution to deceive opponents at or immediately before the snap.
- E. For a disqualified player to reenter the game
- F. For a replaced player or substitute to hinder an opponent, touch the ball, influence the play, or otherwise participate.
- G. If, prior to a change of possession, an A or K player goes out-of-bounds and returns inbounds during the down to participate, unless blocked out-of-bounds by an opponent. If a player is blocked out-of-bounds by an opponent and returns inbounds during the down, he/she shall return at the first opportunity. During the down, no player shall intentionally go out-of-bounds and return to the field, intentionally touch the ball, influence the play, or otherwise participate.
- H. When any player, replaced player, or substitute enters during a down

Penalty: Illegal Participation, 10 yards

RULE 10. ENFORCEMENT OF PENALTIES

SECTION 1. PROCEDURE AFTER A FOUL

Article 3. Dead Ball Foul.

When a foul occurs during a dead ball between downs or before a snap, the officials shall not permit the ball to become live. The penalty for any foul between downs, any non-player foul, or any unsportsmanlike foul, is enforced from the succeeding spot. If a dead ball foul occurs after time expires for any period, the penalty shall be measured from the succeeding spot. The succeeding spot is where the ball would next be snapped if a foul had not occurred.

Article 4. Live Ball/Dead Ball Foul.

When a live ball foul by 1 team is followed by a dead ball foul by the opponent, the penalties are administered separately and in order of occurrence. When the same team commits a live ball foul followed by 1 or more dead ball fouls, all fouls may be penalized.

Article 5. Establishing Zone Line-to-Gain

- A. On a live ball foul mark off the penalty yardage then establish the zone line-to-gain.
- B. Penalties for fouls with succeeding spot enforcement which occur prior to the ready for play signal shall be administered before setting the zone line-to-gain down box for a new series.
- C. Penalties for fouls with succeeding spot enforcement which occur after the ready for play signal shall be administered after setting the zone line-to-gain down box for a new series.

NOTE: During overtime, the zone line-to-gain is always the goal line.

SECTION 2. TYPES OF PLAY AND BASIC ENFORCEMENT SPOTS

Article 1. Live Ball Fouls.

Any live ball foul is penalized according to the All-But-One Enforcement Principle except:

- A. A foul, which occurs simultaneous to the snap, is penalized from the previous spot.
- B. A non-player foul, unsportsmanlike foul, or dead ball foul is penalized from the succeeding spot.

Article 2. All-But-One Enforcement Principle.

Enforcement philosophy is based on the fact that a team is given the advantage of the distance, which is gained without assistance of a foul. It is assumed that the only foul that would give this aid is a foul by the offense behind the basic spot.

Therefore, all fouls but this one, that is a foul by the offense behind the basic spot, are penalized from the basic spot.

This one foul is penalized from the spot of the foul. NOTE: Exception: Roughing the Passer.

Article 4. Loose Ball Play.

A loose ball play is action during:

- A. A punt, other than post scrimmage kick fouls
- B. A legal forward pass.

- C. A backward pass (including the snap), illegal kick, or fumble made by A from on or behind his/her scrimmage line (first ball spotter –orange) and prior to a change of team possession.
- D. The run or runs which precede a legal pass, punt, or fumble.

If a foul occurs during a loose ball play, the basic enforcement spot is the previous spot, the spot of the snap.

EXCEPTION 1: The penalty for roughing the passes on a completed forward pass will be enforced from the dead ball spot when the run ends beyond A's scrimmage line and no change of possession occurred.

EXCEPTION 2: A post scrimmage kick (PSK) foul is an R foul that occurs on R's side of the neutral zone prior to the end of the kick during a punt that ends beyond the neutral zone and K does not have possession of the ball when the kick ends. The PSK spot is the spot where the kick ends. R retains the ball after the penalty enforcement from the PSK spot when a PSK foul occurs. R fouls behind the PSK spot are spot fouls. The spot where the kick ends is R's 14 if the kick ends in the end zone.

EXCEPTION 3: Kick catching interference, 10 yards from the spot of the foul and a 1st down, or 10 yards from the previous spot and replay the down.

Article 5. Running Play.

A running play is any action, which is not a loose ball play.

- A. Behind the line it includes:
 - 1. A run, which is not followed by a loose ball behind the line.
 - 2. A run, which is followed by an illegal pass from behind the line.
- B. Beyond the line it includes any run. A run ends when a runner loses possession, but the related running play continues until the ball becomes dead or some player again gains possession.

If a foul occurs during a running play, the basic enforcement spot is the spot where the related run ends.

- A. Where the ball becomes dead if the runner does not lose possession
- B. Where the player loses possession if his/her run is followed by his/her fumble into the opponent's end zone, his/her illegal forward pass, or his/her backward pass beyond the scrimmage line that is intercepted
- C. At the spot of the catch when the momentum rule is in effect

SECTION 3. SPECIAL ENFORCEMENTS

Article 1. Automatic First Down Fouls.

Fouls by B that give A an automatic first down are:

- A. Roughing the Passer who has thrown the ball from behind the A scrimmage line (first ball spotter – orange).
- B. Illegally Secured Flag Belt.

Article 2. Dead Ball Fouls.

Penalties for dead ball fouls are enforced separately and in the order of occurrence. Dead ball fouls are not coupled with live ball fouls or other dead ball fouls to create double or multiple fouls. Where there are 10 yard dead ball fouls (or live ball fouls treated as dead ball fouls) committed by each team prior to penalty administration, each 10 yard foul will cancel a 10 yard foul on the other team. Any remaining 10 yard fouls will be enforced. Any 5 yard dead ball fouls will be enforced separately and in order of occurrence and would never cancel with a 10 yard foul.

Article 3. Double Foul.

It is a double foul if both team commit fouls, other than unsportsmanlike or non-player, during the same live ball period which:

- A. There is no change of team possession.
- B. There is a change of team possession, and the team in possession at the end of the down fouls prior to the final change of possession.
- C. There is a change of possession and the team in final possession accepts the penalty for its opponent's foul.

In (A), (B) and (C) the penalties cancel and the down is replayed.

EXCEPTION: If each team fouls during a down in which there is a change of team possession, the team last gaining possession may retain the ball, provided its foul is not prior to the final change of possession and it declined the penalty for its opponents foul(s), other than unsportsmanlike or non-player. This exception is commonly referred to as the principle of "clean hands." NOTE: This Rule does not apply to double fouls during a Try or overtime period.

Article 4. Goal Line.

For a defensive foul, if the enforcement spot which is now the basic spot, is on or behind the offended team's goal line, any measurement is from the succeeding spot or goal line.

Article 5. Half the Distance.

A measurement cannot take the ball more than half the distance from the enforcement spot to the offending team's goal line. If the penalty is great than this, the ball is placed halfway between the enforcement spot and the goal line.

Article 6. Last Play of Period.

Succeeding spot fouls that occur: A. during the last play of the game; B. during the last play of an overtime period; or C. dead ball fouls which occur after the last play of a game or overtime period. These fouls can be carried over to overtime, unless a touchdown is scored on that play, in which case the penalty can only be enforced on the Try.

Article 7. Loss of Down Fouls.

Fouls by A which include loss of down are:

- A. Illegal Backward Pass.
- B. Illegal Forward Pass.
- C. Illegally Secured Flag Belt

Teams committing a loss of down foul lose the right to replay the previous down.

Article 8. Multiple Live Ball Fouls.

When two or more live ball fouls (other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer) are committed by the same team, only one penalty may be chosen by the offended team.

Article 9. Safety.

If the offensive team throws an illegal forward pass from its end zone or commits any other foul for which the penalty is accepted and measurement is from on or behind the goal line which is now the basic spot, is a safety.

Article 10. Touchdown.

- A. If there is a foul by the scoring team (other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer) during a down which results in a touchdown, the acceptance of the penalty nullifies the score.
- B. If an opponent of the scoring team commits a fouls (other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer) during a down in which a touchdown is scored, and there was not a change of team possession during the down, A may accept the results of the play and then choose to have the foul enforced either on the Try, or after the Try, at the succeeding spot
- C. If an opponent of the scoring team commits a foul (other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer) during a down in which a touchdown is scored, and there was a change of team possession during the down, and such foul occurs after the change of team possession, the scoring team may accept the results of the play and then choose to have the foul enforced either on the Try, or after the Try, at the succeeding spot
- D. If either team commits an unsportsmanlike or nonplayer foul during the down in which a touchdown is scored, the opponent may accept the results of the play and then choose to have the foul enforced either on the Try, or after the Try, at the succeeding spot

NOTE: In B, C, and D above, unless moved by penalty, the succeeding spot will be the 14 yard line or the 10 yard line in overtime.

Article 11. Try.

- A. If either team commits a dead ball foul following a touchdown and prior to the initial ready for play on a Try, the offended team has the option of enforcing the penalty on the Try, or after the Try, at the succeeding spot
- B. If there is a foul by A (other than unsportsmanlike or nonplayer) during a down which results in a successful Try, acceptance of the penalty nullifies the score. IF the foul carries a loss of down, the Try is not replayed.
- C. If there is a foul by B during a successful Try, the penalty may be enforced at the succeeding spot
- D. If a double foul occurs, the down is replayed.

CO-REC MODIFICATIONS

All of the above general rules apply with the following exceptions, and clarifications:
RULE 1. THE GAME, FIELD, PLAYERS AND EQUIPMENT

SECTION 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 2. The Game – Co-Recreational Rule Only.

The Co-Recreational game shall be played between 2 teams of 8 players, 4 men and 4 women. Teams are required to have a minimum of 5 (five) players to avoid a forfeit. Teams with 7 players shall be 4 men and 3 women or 4 women and 3 men. Six players shall be 3 men and 3 women, 4 women and 2 men, or 2 women and 4 men. Teams of five players shall be 3 men and 2 women or 3 women and 2 men.

Article 3. The Ball

The regular, intermediate, youth, or junior size shall be used.

SECTION 3. POSITION AND ACTION DURING THE SNAP

Article 2. Minimum Line Players.

The offensive team must have at least 1 player set on their scrimmage line (first ball spotter – orange) at the snap. The remaining players must be either on their scrimmage line (first ball spotter – orange) or behind their backfield line. All players must be inbounds. A player in motion is not counted as one of the 4 on the scrimmage line. *Penalty: Live Ball Foul, Illegal Procedure, 5 yards.*

RULE 7: SNAPPING, HANDING, AND PASSING THE BALL

SECTION 5: MALE RUNNER

Article 1.

A Team A male cannot advance the ball through the Team A's scrimmage line. There are no restrictions when:

- A. A run by a male runner once the ball has been beyond the Team A or K scrimmage line.
- B. A run by a female runner.
- C. a change of team possession

PENALTY: ILLEGAL PROCEDURE, 5 YARDS FROM PREVIOUS SPOT.

SECTION 7. LEGAL AND ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS

Article 3. Illegal Forward Pass – Co-Recreation Rule Only.

- A. The term “closed” means a male player may NOT throw a legal forward pass completion to any other male player. The term “open” means that any other player can complete a pass to any other player. Note: All illegal forward pass fouls are classified as fouls during a running play. Thus, illegal forward passes do not change the “open/closed” status of a down.
- B. The first down of each half or overtime possession shall be “open.” The first down of a new series following a team change of possession shall be “open.”
- C. If the crew of officials erroneously indicates the “open/closed” status of a down, the play is nullified and the down will be repeated.
- D. During the offensive team's possession there may not be 2 consecutive legal forward pass completions from a male passer to a male receiver. This rule applies to the Try.
- E. If a male passer completes a legal forward pass to a male receiver, the next legal forward pass must involve either a female passer or a female receiver for positive yards. The spot where the ball becomes dead by Rule must be beyond the A scrimmage line (first ball spotter – orange). There is NO foul for a female receiver being tagged or deflagged behind the A scrimmage line. The next legal forward pass completion remains “closed.”
- F. A legal forward pass caught jointly by male and female teammates is considered a female reception
- G. There are no other restrictions concerning a male passer completing legal forward passes to a female receiver, or female to female, or female to male.

H. Any foul, whether is accepted or declined, shall have no effect on whether the next forward pass completion is “open” or “closed.”

PENALTY: ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS, 5 YARDS FROM WHERE THE PASS WAS RELEASED AND LOSS OF DOWN.

Article 4. Illegal Forward Pass – Co-Recreation Rule Only.

If a female passer completes a forward pass to a male receiver behind the A scrimmage line (1st ball spotter – orange) on either an “open” or “closed” play and any A male runs beyond this scrimmage line, it is an illegal forward pass.

PENALTY: ILLEGAL FORWARD PASS, 5 YARDS FROM THE SPOT OF THE PASS AND LOSS OF DOWN.

RULE 8. SCORING PLAYS AND TOUCHBACK

SECTION 2. MERCY RULE

Article 1. One Minute Warning.

If a team is 30 or more points ahead when the Referee announces 10 minutes left in the second half, the game shall be over. If a team is 18 or more points ahead when the Referee announces the 1-minute warning for the second half, the game shall be over.

Article 2. After One Minute Warning.

If a team scores during the last minute of the second half and that score creates a point differential of 18 or more points, the game shall end at that point.

SECTION 3. TOUCHDOWN = 6 OR 9 POINTS

Article 1. Touchdown Values.

If a female scores a touchdown, the point value is 9. If a female player throws a legal forward pass and a touchdown is scored by any A player, prior to a change of team possession, the point value is 9.